

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A secure repository individualized for a hardware environment and a method and system for providing the same. The secure repository includes a hidden cryptographic key and code that applies the key without requiring access to a copy of the key. The code that implements the secure repository is generated in a manner that is at least partly based on a hardware ID associated with the hardware environment in which the secure repository is to be installed, and may also be based on a random number. Cryptographic functions implemented by the secure repository include decryption of encrypted information and validation of cryptographically signed information. The secure repository may be coupled to an application program, which uses cryptographic services provided by the secure repository, by way of a decoupling interface that provides a common communication and authentication interface for diverse types of secure repositories. The decoupling interface may take the form of a single application programmer interface (API) usable with multiple dynamically linkable libraries.